Exhibit #7

Google Confirms It Has Been Hacked — What User Data Has Been Stolen?

F forbes.com/sites/daveywinder/2025/08/09/google-confirms-it-has-been-hacked---user-data-stolen

Davey Winder

August 9, 2025

Google confirms it has been hacked.

SOPA Images/LightRocket via Getty Images

Update, August 9, 2025: This story, originally published on August 7, has been updated with additional information from cybersecurity experts regarding the now confirmed hacking of Google. This article explores the user data that has been compromised during the attack and what organizations need to do next.

The Google Threat Intelligence Group has officially confirmed that user data has been stolen following a successful hack attack impacting one of its databases. Here’s what we know so far.

ForbesEmergency Microsoft Security Warning Confirmed — Act Now, CISA SaysBy Davey Winder

Google Has Been Hacked — Data Has Been Compromised

This is not a warning that the Google Chrome web browser is in need of an urgent security update, or a story about switching from passwords to passkeys to protect your Google account. No, this is exactly what the headline says: Google has been hacked.

PROMOTED

Source? That would be Google itself.

An August 5 posting by the Google Threat Intelligence Group has confirmed that one of the corporate databases was impacted by hackers thought to be associated with the ShinyHunters ransomware group, more formally known as UNC6040.

"Google responded to the activity, performed an impact analysis and began mitigations," the GTIG posting stated, adding the database in question was a Salesforce instance "used to store contact information and related notes for small and medium businesses."

MORE FOR YOU

Google Confirms Gmail Attacks—Change Every Password On This List

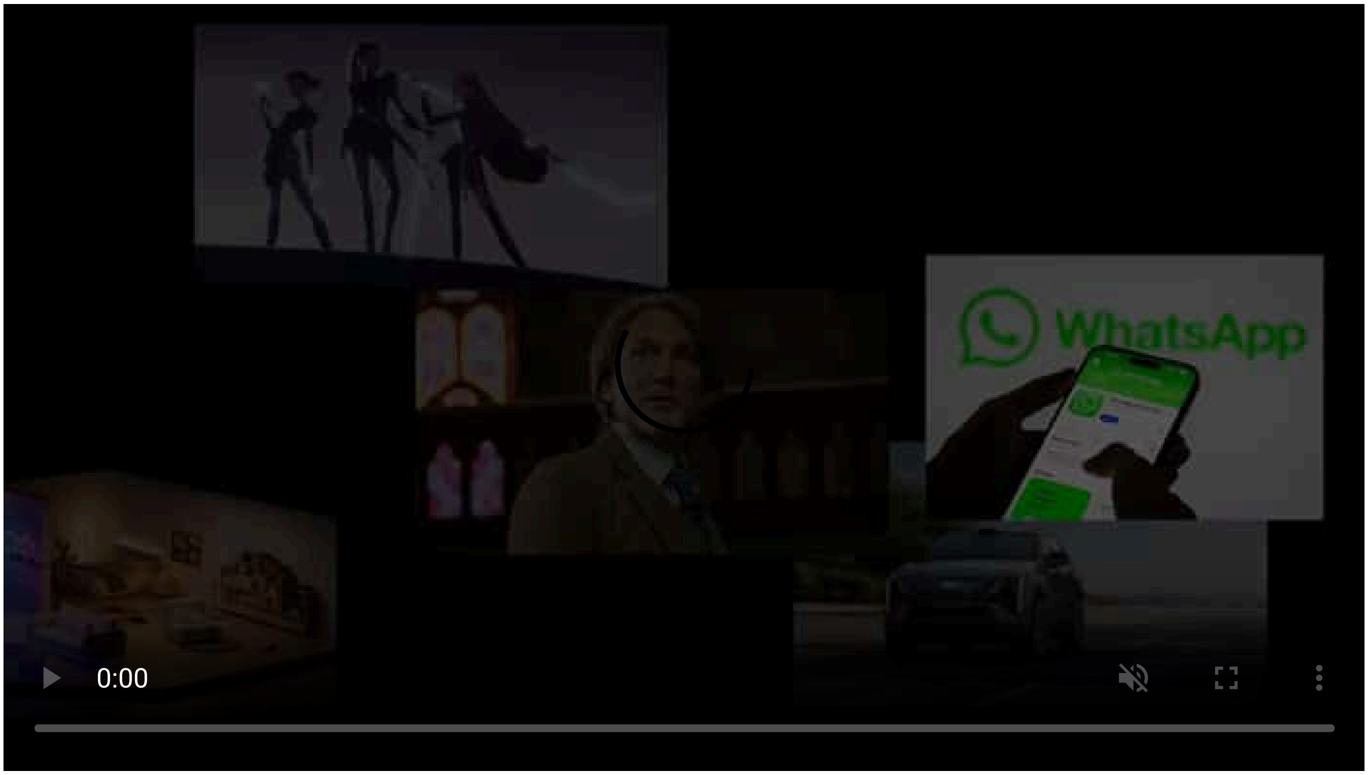
Google's Gmail Warning—Hackers Gain Access To User Accounts

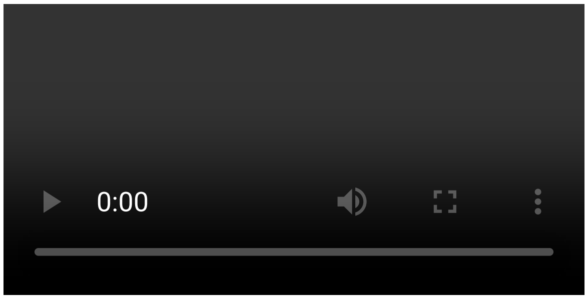
Trump Seen With Bruised Right Hand Again—Here's Everything We Know About The Condition

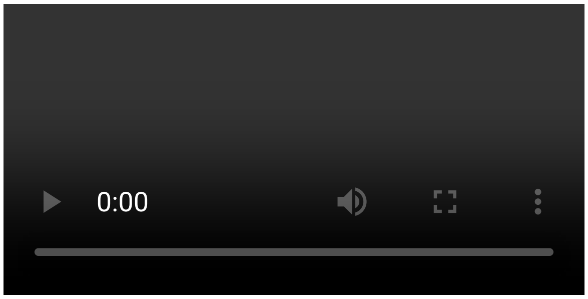
"The speed at which organisations are falling victim to cyber attacks targeting Salesforce instances is nothing short of alarming," Robin Brattel, CEO at Lab 1, said. "We need to be honest: malicious campaigns are being scaled quicker than ever as hackers are using information that's already been made public, often from past data breaches, to target organisations."

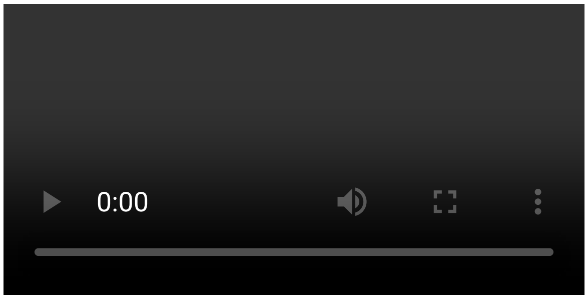
Customer data was, Google said, "retrieved by the threat actor," in the short period of time that the attack window remained open. Although Google has not gone into great detail regarding the attack as of yet, it did confirm that the stolen data consisted of "basic and largely publicly available business information, such as business names and contact details."

I reached out to Google for a statement and a spokesperson told me that the “details that we’re able to share at this time can all be found in our blog update,” adding that this includes additional information regarding the ShinyHunters associated UNC6040 threat group, which “provides the security community with actionable intelligence on this actor.”









Google also stated that ShinyHunters commonly uses an attack tactic of extorting victims using emails or telephone calls demanding bitcoin ransom payments within 72 hours of compromise. It has not, however, confirmed or denied that this was the case here. Google did confirm that the attack itself occurred in June.

ForbesMicrosoft Windows Security Bypass — Hello Hackers Use Own FacesBy Davey Winder

What Cybersecurity Experts Have To Say About The Hacking of Google

“The news that Google has suffered a data breach in the recent wave of attacks executed by ShinyHunters highlights that no organisation is immune to cybercrime,” William Wright, CEO of Closed Door Security, said, adding: “It doesn’t matter if you are a small business or one of the world’s leading technology firms, all organizations are vulnerable.” While Google’s update provides an overview of how these attacks unfolded, Wright continued, “it does not state whether the impacted organisations have been informed, or, if they have been informed, when they were informed.” Which means that the cybercriminals involved, ShinyHunters or not, could have had this information for two months to do with as they saw fit.

“Google has long been one of the leading companies in the world when it comes to cybersecurity,” Jamie Akhtar, CEO of CyberSmart, said, concluding that “if it can happen to one of the wealthiest and best-defended companies in the world, it can happen to anyone.” Akhtar also issued a cautionary word, considering that the attack is being associated with the ShinyHunters ransomware and extortion cybercrime group. “Given what we know about common ransomware methods, it’s very possible this breach stemmed from social engineering or some form of human error,” Akhtar said, adding that this “illustrates that the best technical defences in the world won’t protect you if a member of staff clicks on something they shouldn’t or is artfully duped by social engineering.”

Meanwhile, Dray Agha, senior manager of security operations at Huntress, drew attention to the critical supply chain risks posed by third-party platforms, agreeing with Akhtar’s note of caution. “Even tech giants aren’t immune, highlighting that businesses must rigorously vet and continuously monitor all vendors with access to their data,” Agha warned. “The reported use of voice phishing by UNC6040 is a stark reminder that human factors remain a commonly targeted attack surface.” Which is why, Agha advised that organizations need to invest in a layered approach to security that includes “advanced security awareness training, as well as strict access controls, especially for cloud platforms holding sensitive customer information."

Some cybersecurity experts went further, insisting that “hacks like this are preventable - in fact, they’re impossible - when enterprises deploy truly credential-less authentication.” Of course, Federico Simonetti, the chief technology officer at Xiid, would say that as he has skin in the game, but that doesn’t negate the point being made. If a hacker calls an IT help desk in an attempt to socially engineer their way to a user password reset, Simonetti said, they can’t. “Today, credential-less authentication isn’t just a nice-to-have.,” Simonetti insisted, “it's an essential.”

I’ll leave the final word to Akhtar though, who noted that “while any breach at Google is shocking, there’s no indication as yet that any of the data stolen is particularly sensitive or places customers in real peril.” Indeed, Google has already stated that the compromised user data is a Salesforce instance containing publicly available information. “As such,” Akhtar concluded, “our advice to businesses is to be cautious but don’t panic.”

ForbesCamera Hacking — America’s Cyber Defense Agency Issues WarningBy Davey Winder
Editorial StandardsReprints & Permissions

Join The Conversation

Comments

2

One Community. Many Voices. Create a free account to share your thoughts.

Read our community guidelines .